

21st March 2014

fufu fun

Travel is full of extraordinary experiences and we had several the other night.

First, a little background so that it will be easier to understand something that happened: In Ghana, besides their given names, people are also called by the name of the day they were born. As a person born on Thursday, I had chosen Abaeya for my name and Beverly picked Kukua for hers (Wednesday.) There are male and female forms, several variations of each, and even rules in case more than one child in a family is born on the same day. Currently, the Coca Cola company has put day names on their Coke bottles and ads discuss “characteristics” of people, based on the day they were born.

When we toured schools we were sometimes addressed as Auntie Kukua and Auntie Abaeya.

Beverly and I wanted to try fufu, a local starch that is served with soup. So far, several Ghanians had assumed that we would not like fufu, and they seemed to hesitate to suggest places we could get it. Bonnee (last year's TGC visitor who liked Takoradi so much she is

back for six more months) suggested we eat at “God is Love Chop Bar.”



[[http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-](http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-Zmav4Z7bLII/UzRL7hCYm6I/AAAAAAAAAEo/MKF4ZmzaZm8/s1600/Chop+bar.jpg)

[Zmav4Z7bLII/UzRL7hCYm6I/AAAAAAAAAEo/MKF4ZmzaZm8/s1600/Chop+bar.jpg](http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-Zmav4Z7bLII/UzRL7hCYm6I/AAAAAAAAAEo/MKF4ZmzaZm8/s1600/Chop+bar.jpg)]

It turns out that a chop bar is a place they serve inexpensive food. At the God Is Love Chop Bar this takes the form of a variety of soups. At the restaurant, Mr Dedjoe-Djokotoe (Christian, our host) first made sure we got a chance to see how fufu is made. A mixture of cassava and plantain are pounded together until it makes a ball of dough, which is placed in the bottom of a bowl. Meats are often put on top (for us there was tilapia and goat meat) and then a soup is poured on top of everything. Beverly had groundnut soup (made with peanuts,) while Christian and I had light soup (meat broth with a little pepper.)



[<http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-frBsZtdwBco/UzRMSXWziHI/AAAAAAAAAEw/kDcXCCLjr8U/s1600/poundingfufu.jpg>]
pounding fufu

I was excited to see the fufu being made and asked permission to take a photo of the girl who was pounding it. When the flash went off, kitchen workers in the background were unhappy because they were afraid I'd taken their picture without their permission. About that time I thought I heard "Auntie Abaeya!" which was what I had been called as we toured several schools. I was sure it was for someone else—there must be thousands of Auntie Abaeyas in Ghana. Then, I heard, "Auntie Abaeya, Auntie Kukua!," turned around, and saw that one of the waitresses was calling to us.

The waitress was addressing each of us as “Auntie,” which is a nice way people have of speaking to any woman who is older than they are. Even “Grandmother” would have been fine. The waitress, who must have been at one of the schools we had toured, not only recognized us but welcomed us and let the others in the restaurant know who we were. At that point it seems, as Auntie Abaeya, I was even forgiven for the photo taken earlier (although it had been taken with the permission of the subject, really!)

Christian (Mr Dedjoe-Djokotoe) ordered for us and the waitress carried our bowls upstairs to the balcony. As they usually do here when the food is to be eaten with hands, she brought a small bottle of dish soap and a bowl of water for cleaning up. Then, Christian taught us to put the index and middle finger of the right hand into the fufu, cut away a piece of the ball of fufu and roll it up a bit. After that you dip it in the soup and pop it into your mouth, either combining it or alternating it with some of the meat. Our friends, Bonnee and Mr Bentum hadn't arrived yet but we ate while it was hot and then waited for them.



[<http://3.bp.blogspot.com/-feOA6txpCU4/UzRNYdPw43I/AAAAAAAAAFA/SdLkR0DgcsQ/s1600/eating+fufu.jpg>]
eating fufu

Once they arrived, I went down with Mr Bentum while he ordered because I wanted to treat our friends to a meal. A different server attempted to overcharge us. I got a kick out the fact that he tried this on a Math Teacher of the Year! Right away, Mr Bentum added up the account and informed the man that he had it wrong. In the end, the bill was figured correctly!



[http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-FK5Wn_U87rw/UzROoqPFpRI/AAAAAAAAAFM/FOR6AWLVVaw/s1600/Bonneefufu.jpg]



[<http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-sPa8VA4keSM/UzROoKSbIV/AAAAAAAAAFI/62v805XUfls/s1600/Bentumfufu.jpg>]

Everybody had plenty of food, the fufu was good, eating soup with fingers was fun, being recognized as “Aunties” was terrific and

we enjoyed a comfortable, warm evening in the company of exceptional friends.



[<http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-YGezwSuyew4/UzRPisIQSoI/AAAAAAAAAFc/TI9xQV51gZo/s1600/visiting.jpg>]



[<http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-kH90VTOBm-0/UzRPxMVCgI/AAAAAAAAAFk/hQ7Z6RzjptE/s1600/greatgroup.jpg>]

Posted 21st March 2014 by [Lynda Schiff](#)



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Jen Chavez-Miller [March 27, 2014 at 4:34 PM](#)

Lynda - what a wonderful post. These are experiences that are so memorable. Thank you for sharing photos, too!

~ Jen, Colombia group

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Lynda Schiff [March 30, 2014 at 5:00 AM](#)

Jen, I wish everyone, everywhere a great encourager such as you are!

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